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THE INSTRUCTIONS AND REGULATIONS
FOR THE
L E N T O F 1794.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN JESUS CHRIST,

THE time is now come round for the observance of that great annual fast, which our Holy Mother the Church has so religiously kept up in every age since the days of the Apostles: a time of consolation and hope to her, of exultation to those blessed spirits who rejoice at the conversion of sinners, *St. Luke c. xv. v. 7.* and of terror to the infernal enemies of our salvation.

The advantages which the Church proposes to herself, from our due observance of this penitential exercise, are many and great. But let it suffice to speak of that which is the first and most obvious end of fasting; namely the satisfaction of the Divine justice provoked by our sins. In truth how powerfully must this motive operate, at the present time, on the mind of every thinking Christian! What dreadful calamities, spiritual and temporal, do not we see the avenging sword of God actually dealing amongst millions of our nearest neighbours! And how much reason have we to fear, lest our crimes and neglect of the divine graces may call down upon us like chastisements of divine vengeance!

On these therefore and many other accounts, it behoves us, Dearly Beloved Brethren, seriously and cordially to enter into the views of our holy mother the Church, in announcing to us this penitential season, by turning to the Lord with all our hearts in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning. *Joel c. ii.* Let us take care that the penitential spirit here signified, without which the mortification of the body is of little or no avail, breathes through our whole deportment, during this time of penance. Hence far be from every one of us all luxurious banqueting and all studied delicacies. Hence far be from us all attachment to the pomps of Satan, which we renounced in our baptism. Hence above all, far be from us the inconsistency of uniting together the habits of penance and of sin, by pretending to satisfy the justice of God, whilst at the same time we provoke it by new disorders.

Finally let us not separate the concomitant good work of almsdeeds from those of fasting and praying: but rather let us attend to the inspired text where we are assured that *prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold: for alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh us to find mercy and life everlasting.* *Tobias c. xii. v. 8, 9.*

The consideration of the circumstances of the times added to that of the general discipline of the Church, is certainly a motive for our keeping the present Lent with the greatest possible strictness; still however the pressing wants of the numerous poor call for certain dispensations; which after due enquiry and consultation, we allow, as follows, in this district.

I. For flesh meat on all Sundays Tuesdays, and Thursdays, beginning with the first Sunday in Lent and ending with Thursday before Palm Sunday; but this permission of eating flesh meats is allowed only for once in the day on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

II. Eggs are allowed on all days, excepting Ash-Wednesday, the Fridays and the four last days of Holy Week.

III. Cheese is allowed every day, excepting Ash-Wednesday and Good-Friday.

I. Il est permis de faire gras tous les dimanches Mardis & Jeudis pendant cinq Semaines, a commencer du premier dimanche, & finir le Jeudi avant le dimanche des Rameaux. Pour les Mardis & Jeudis, cette permission n'a lieu qu'une fois par jour.

II. On permet l'usage des œufs tous les jours, excepté le Mercredi des Cendres, les Vendredis, & les quatre derniers jours de la Semaine sainte.

III. On permet le fromage tous les jours, excepté les Mercredi des Cendres & le Vendredi Saint.

+ JOHN, CENTURIEN, V. A. L.